

Overview of Wetland Resources

There are 947,652 wetlands—potholes, dugouts, reservoirs, and natural lakes—in eastern South Dakota. These wetlands occupy a total of 2,137,929 acres. Rivers and streams account for another 69,300 acres. These estimates represent the number and area of wetlands under “typical” conditions.

Wetlands cover about 9.8% of the total landscape of eastern South Dakota. Extremes are Lincoln County (4.6%) and Sanborn County (15.6%).

Most eastern South Dakota wetlands are small; about 60% are less than half an acre, and almost 75% are smaller than an acre.

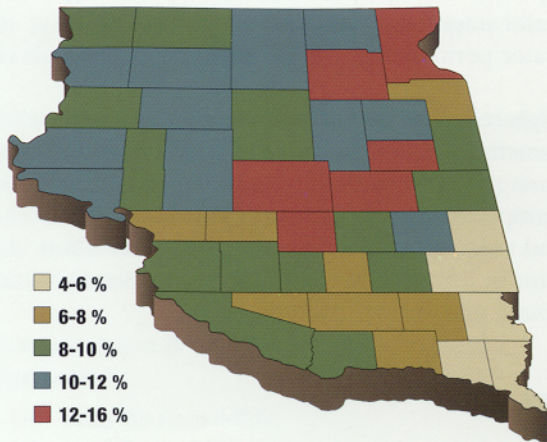
About 83% of temporaries, 55% of seasonals, and 21% of semipermanents are smaller than 1 acre. In fact, less than 5% of all wetlands are larger than 5 acres.

Legislation and government programs that protect only wetlands larger than 1 acre put most eastern South Dakota wetlands at risk of being drained. About 465,500 wetlands—about half of all eastern South Dakota wetlands—are jeopardized by proposals to eliminate protection for frequently farmed wetlands and wetlands smaller than 1 acre.

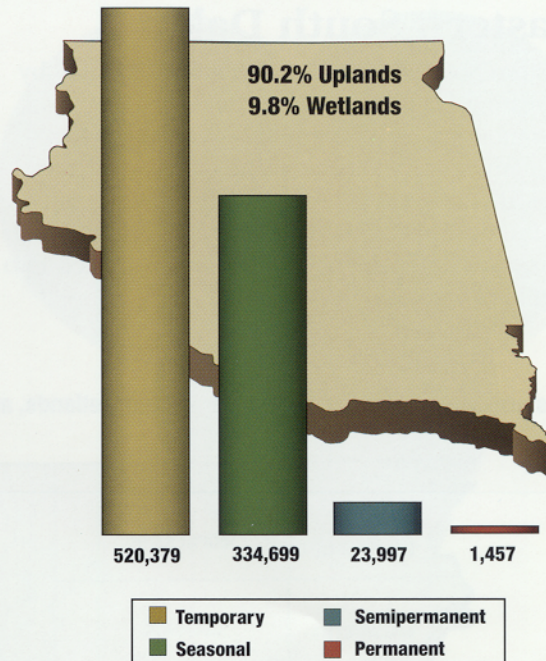


High densities of temporary and seasonal wetlands occur in the central part of eastern South Dakota

Percent of total county area in wetlands.



Number of wetlands by water regime.



Size structure of eastern South Dakota wetlands.

